

Group Health Patient Medication Disposal Program



Background

- Pilot completed 2006-2008 in collaboration with:
Local Hazardous Waste Program in King County,
Pacific Northwest Pollution Prevention Resource Center,
Snohomish County Solid Waste Division,
Washington State Dept of Ecology,
Public Health – Seattle & King County
Northwest Product Stewardship
Washington State Board of Pharmacy
- Collection bins in 25 GH clinics in 6 counties funded by Group Health since 2009
- Process includes secure collection, centralized screening, and secured transportation for incineration
- Safely collected and disposed of over 75,000 pounds of medication

Successes

- Demonstration that a secure, on-going, readily available collection venue in pharmacies is possible
- Despite no advertising outside of Group Health, collected amounts continue to increase annually
- No instances of diversion

Challenges

- Lack of satisfactory process for disposing of controlled substances
- On-going sustainable funding
- Additional sites for collection readily available to public on an on-going basis

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